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REMARKS

In the Office Action dated August 19, 2003, claims 9-18 are pending, claims 16-18 are allowed, claims 9-11 and 13-15 are rejected and objection is made to claim 12. Applicants appreciate the indication of patentable subject matter.

The above amendment to claim 10 is made to more particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter regarded as invention.

Applicants appreciate the courteous interview extended to their attorney by Examiner Stewart on November 12, 2003. During the interview, the objection to the drawings was discussed, as well as the 112 rejection, the citation of Doddroe and applicants invention. The substance of Applicants remarks is included herein.

Regarding the objection to the drawings, Applicants explained that the term "lower leg portion" as used in claim 13 is not a component of the claimed device, but merely part of phrase further describing the term "adapter. The Examiner indicated that he would withdraw the objection. This also overcomes the 112 rejection, which also will be withdrawn.

Regarding Doddroe, the Examiner indicated that he gave no weight to the claim term "only" in connection with the tension element transmitting **only** a tension force. He indicated that the term was not structural. However, it was explained that the

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transmitting **only** a tension force was a structural element because it changes the structure substantially. Thus, the two springs can move toward each other in the invention whereas that is not possible because of the plate 20 structure in Doddroe, which **not** only transmits a tension force but also transmits and resists a compression force.

With respect to claim 10, the difference in the structure of Doddroe and the claimed invention was pointed out and further that the springs in Doddroe do not "rest against" each other, as claimed in the present application. The Examiner stated that he did not read the claim as requiring the springs to be in contact with each other and suggested that we clarify the claim language using the term "contact." Such clarification is provided in the above amendment.

It is respectfully submitted that the subject application is in a condition for allowance. Early and favorable action is requested.

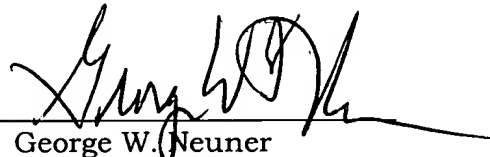
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If for any reason a fee is required, a fee paid is inadequate or credit is owed for any excess fee paid, the Commissioner is hereby authorized and requested to charge Deposit Account No. **04-1105**.

Respectfully submitted,

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By:



George W. Neuner
Reg. No. 26,964
Edwards & Angell, LLP
P.O. Box 9169
Boston, MA 02209
(617) 439- 4444

Customer No. 21874